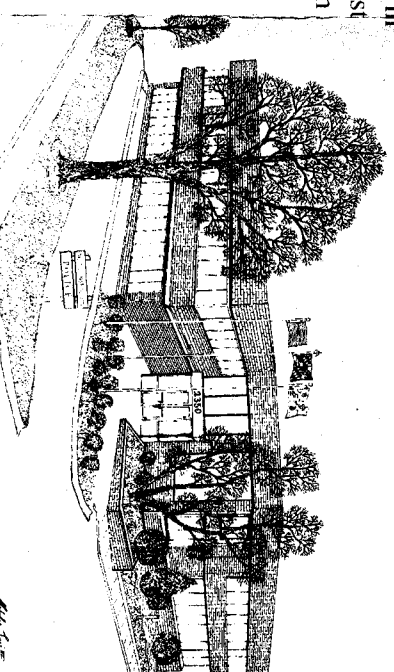




False Alarm Reduction Unit

False Alarm Reduction Tips



DEPARTMENT OF POLICE
FALSE ALARM REDUCTION UNIT
255 N. Washington Street, #303
Rockville, MD 20850
(301) 279-1917 FAX (301) 279-1916

WHAT YOUR ALARM COMPANY SHOULD DO FOR YOU

In an effort to reduce false alarms, your alarm company is required, by law, to take certain proactive measures.

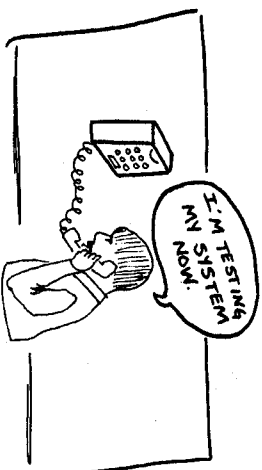
1. Your alarm/monitoring company must attempt to verify every alarm signal, except duress or hold-up, **before** requesting police dispatch.
2. If it is determined that an alarm signal is false, your alarm/monitoring company **must** immediately attempt to cancel the police dispatch. *Don't let your alarm company tell you that this cannot be done.* You cannot personally cancel a police dispatch unless you initiated the call.

3. Your alarm company must notify you, in writing, within 72 hours, if they have requested a police dispatch to your alarm location.

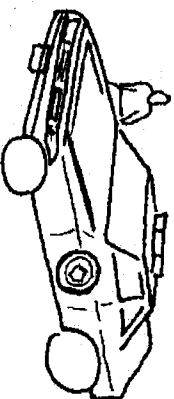
4. Your alarm company must not request police dispatch to an alarm activation until the alarm system is properly registered.

5. When you have a new alarm system installed in your home or business, your alarm company must provide you with a completed, signed Installation Certificate. This Certificate affirms that:

- ◆ the system meets or exceeds installation standards,
- ◆ all persons responsible for operating the system have been fully trained on its proper use, and
- ◆ the alarm business has explained the requirements for registration and has completed and provided the alarm user with a copy of the registration form.



- ◆ Test your alarm system regularly. Be sure to notify your alarm/monitoring company **first** so that no request for police dispatch is made.

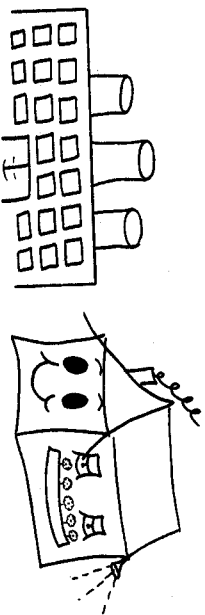


- ◆ Have your alarm system checked once per year by a licensed alarm company.
- ◆ Expand your protection with a business or neighborhood watch.

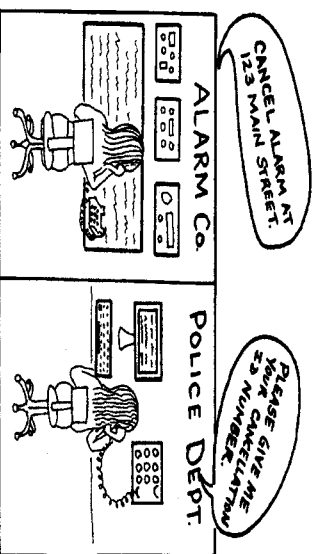


Cover drawing of Montgomery County Police Headquarters by Nicholas Tucci III.
Illustrations by Pebble Prohero.

It is important that all alarm users become aware of the increasing burden false alarms place on police departments throughout the country. False alarms, for the most part, are avoidable. The False Alarm Reduction Unit (FARU) of the Montgomery County Department of Police has prepared this brochure to help you avoid common mistakes that cause false alarms.

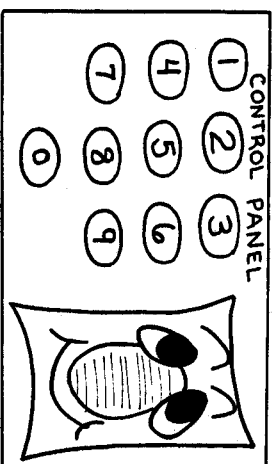


- ◆ Before selecting an alarm system, consult several licensed alarm representatives about cost, the types of equipment with proven low false alarm rates, and exactly what type of equipment would be appropriate for your environment.



- ◆ Review with your alarm company the procedures you expect them to follow when an alarm activates. Do you want them to attempt to call more than one person on your contact list before requesting police dispatch? Do you only want the police notified if an exterior and interior alarm activate? Put your instructions in writing!

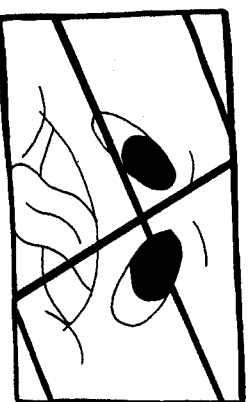
- ◆ Fully educate every person to whom you have given authority to enter your home or business on the precise operation of your alarm system. This may include domestic/cleaning crews, children, neighbors, caretakers, employees, temporary staff.



- ◆ Be sure that all individuals with authority to operate your system have been given the appropriate passcode. If you change your passcode, be sure to inform all affected persons.

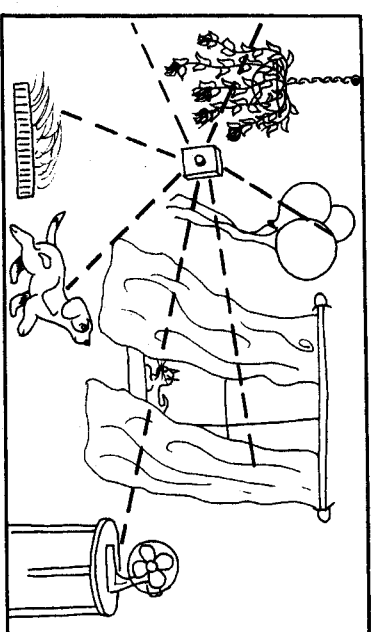
- ◆ Always keep doors and windows locked when the alarm is in an "ON" mode to reduce the chance that friends, neighbors or customers enter and cause the alarm to activate.

- ◆ Use dead-bolt locks.

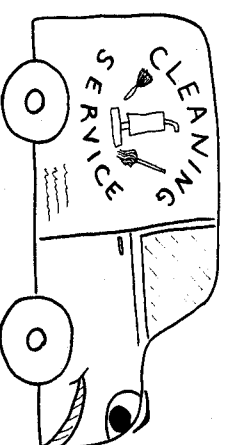


- ◆ Door and window frames must be kept in good condition, as loose joints could cause false alarms.

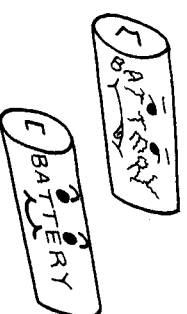
- ◆ Check for drafts that may move curtains, plants, or hanging objects, such as mylar balloons, which would activate motion detectors.



- ◆ If you have pets, take special care to purchase an alarm system that is tolerant of pets. You may not want to purchase motion detectors if your pets have free run of the house when the alarm is on. Also, some dog barks may activate glass break detectors.



- ◆ Be aware that cleaning and repair crews do cause false alarms for which you will be responsible.



- ◆ Regularly replace batteries in your system as per manufacturer's specifications.